

Date: August 14, 2020
To: Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 
Subject: **Update on 2020 Census Initiative**

This report provides an update on the City's 2020 Census engagement efforts from December 2019 through July 2020, including adjustments made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

In December 2019, the Long Beach Complete Count Committee (Committee) concluded a strategic planning process that resulted in the adoption of integrated, multi-organizational Strategic and Implementation Plans. The adoption of both Plans coalesced six months of planning and deliberation among the 50 Committee members and produced four strategic goals and 16 supporting objectives that align with State and County goals, which continue to guide the Committee's Census engagement efforts. Outlined below is a summary of the goals and objectives:

- *Goal 1: Count everyone:*
 - Objective A. Align with existing census efforts
 - Objective B. Cultivate resources, services, and partnerships
 - Objective C. Challenge all LB-CCC members to do outreach
 - Objective D. Work with trusted messengers
- *Goal 2: Focus on Hard-To-Count Populations:*
 - Objective A. Identify specific populations
 - Objective B. Customize messages for different groups
 - Objective C. Conduct grassroots outreach for hard-to-count (HTC) populations
 - Objective D. Leverage resources to reach HTC populations
- *Goal 3: Nurture a Local Census Workforce:*
 - Objective A. Engage Pacific Gateway
 - Objective B. Partner with LB-CCC organizations to connect to employees
 - Objective C. Hire and train people from HTC communities
 - Objective D. Assist local census employees beyond the census effort
- *Goal 4: Implement Strategically:*
 - Objective A. Build LB-CCC member partnerships
 - Objective B. Develop and deploy shared resources
 - Objective C. Evaluate effectiveness of the LB-CCC activities
 - Objective D. Retain engagement through 2020 Census

In its Implementation Plan, the Committee identified more than 300 activities to carry out the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. The schedule for implementation activities was guided by the original United States Census Bureau (Bureau) operational timeline, as reflected in the table below.

Activity/Operation	Original Schedule
Self-response	March 12 - July 31
Group Quarters	April 2 - June 5
Non-response Follow-up	May 13 - July 31
Counts to President	By December 31, 2020
Redistricting Counts to State	By April 1, 2021

More information on Committee planning activities and the Strategic and Implementation Plans goals can be found in the [December 2019 Census Initiative Update](#).

On December 10, 2019, the City hosted the first State Census Joint Informational Hearing out of Sacramento and was recognized as a leader in California for its census planning and citywide partnership coordination through the Committee. In January 2020, City and Committee operationalized census engagement efforts. However, due to COVID-19 and the subsequent Safer At Home Order on March 19, 2020, City staff halted all in-person activities, and began working with Committee partners to make adjustments to the operations. All in-person operations were redirected to primarily digital engagement.

The remainder of this report provides information on 2020 Census operations prior to and after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the status of 2020 Census response rates, current challenges, and anticipated outreach activities for the balance of the 2020 Census timeline.

Pre-COVID 19 Operations

This section provides a summary of key operational activities conducted by the City and Committee to prepare for the census questionnaire self-response period initiated by the Bureau on March 12, 2020. From January 2020 through mid-March 2020, the Committee and City finalized major outstanding operational preparations and began to activate planned citywide infrastructure, which included readying of facilities, acquiring technology devices, educating Committee partners and their networks, conducting planned events, creating new events, and continuous development of a hyperlocal communication strategies.

Committee Operations

Beginning January 17, 2020, as Co-Chair with Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) and primary convener of the Committee, the City continued to plan, organize, and conduct in-person meetings with the 50 partner organizations on the third Friday of each month, with a focus on carrying out the Committee's adopted implementation plan. The City also led the creation and distribution of Long Beach specific outreach materials among all organizations and conducted constant direct partner engagement and capacity building on behalf of the Committee. The Committee's last in-person collaboration was held on February 21, 2020 and

included planning a Census Day Kickoff press event at Renaissance High School, which was ultimately canceled due to COVID-19.

Interns and Volunteers

Ten paid interns were recruited from LBUSD and California State University Long Beach (CSULB). Each intern contributed between 8 to 15 hours per week and greatly expanded census operational capabilities and helped intensify census engagement efforts. Interns assisted in a wide range of areas, including census trainings, outreach events, communications, project management, and project administration.

The City was also in the final stages of entering into an Agreement with the Center for Community Engagement, at CSULB, to recruit approximately 350 student volunteers to support planned City department and partner outreach events, neighborhood canvassing, and direct questionnaire assistance. City staff had begun recruitment efforts by presenting at Political Science classes and had initiated the background check process for the first recruits. Unfortunately, this opportunity was not implemented due to COVID-19.

Staff and Community Trainings

The City Census Team conducted a series of Census Champion Trainings aimed at educating and creating census ambassadors from three groups – City staff, partner organization staff, and residents. From October 2019 to March 2020, approximately 300 City staff were trained from Library Services, Health and Human Services, Financial Management, Development Services, and Parks, Recreation and Marine Departments. Staff were provided with talking points and census materials as part of the training to engage residents as they conducted their daily duties.

Trainings for partner organizations also began in October 2019, and included similar content as City staff trainings. A list of organizations that were trained prior to Safer At Home guidelines is provided below.

- Neighborhood Leadership Program Alumni
- Providence Senior Center Association
- Long Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Collins Neighborhood Association
- Long Beach Ministers Alliance
- Long Beach Memorial Care Hospital
- Long Beach Unified School District, Family Resource Center

Lastly, in early March 2020, staff launched the Census Champions Training series to educate, motivate, and activate residents to spread the message about the 2020 Census. Nine trainings were scheduled to take place throughout the City. Due to COVID-19, only three trainings were conducted on March 7, March 10, and March 12.

Despite the canceling of trainings for partner staff, and our residents, the Census Team trained over 420 community members. In total, the Census team trained approximately 720 people as part of the Census Champions Training.

Workforce Development for Census Bureau Jobs

The City worked closely with the Census Bureau to achieve a robust applicant pool of thousands of candidates across Long Beach and 16 surrounding cities. The Library Services and Parks, Recreation and Marine Departments opened their facilities for citywide job recruitment at all libraries and several park facilities. Economic Development, through Pacific Gateway, also played a crucial role by assisting the Bureau with hosting multiple job fairs, providing in-person application assistance, clarifying job opportunity roles and responsibilities, lending their recruitment tools, and creating shared messaging. Committee partnerships also utilized their communication channels to alert residents of Bureau job opportunities.

In preparation for needed training spaces, Library Services, Park, Recreation and Marine, and Pacific Gateway also made their classrooms and facilities available to train Bureau recruits. Additionally, the Energy Resources, Health and Human Services, and Water Departments made their large meeting rooms available. Each of the three rooms would have allowed for mass trainings to be conducted by accommodating 100 to 150 recruits per training session.

In-person Questionnaire Assistance

Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) and Questionnaire Action Kiosks (QAKs) are publicly-available stations with a technology device that has safe and reliable broadband access. They are sponsored by the City, area nonprofits, and other organizations. The difference between the two stations is that QACs support residents with in-person assistance and QAKs do not support residents with in-person assistance and, instead have web and print material available for guidance. In total, 37 City facilities were identified as QAC and QAK locations, and a Verizon technology grant was leveraged by the Public Works, and Technology and Innovation Departments to procure 21 Chromebooks for the stations. Committee partners also planned to provide additional locations to complete the questionnaire. LBUSD provided a notable contribution by creating census stations in front offices of all schools, so that parents and guardians could complete the questionnaire in a safe and reliable place. This activity was halted due to COVID-19.

Community Outreach Services

In January 2020, Long Beach nonprofits were invited to submit proposals to educate, motivate, and activate residents to complete the 2020 Census questionnaire in HTC communities and throughout the City. Fifteen proposals requesting \$438,678.00 were submitted and reviewed by the Evaluation Committee. Thirteen proposals met the prescribed criteria and demonstrated a meaningful and necessary contribution to existing census efforts and received a portion of the \$200,000.00 allocated for nonprofit, community-based outreach. Initial funded activities centered heavily on in-person outreach, such as Census Block Parties, Census BBQs, Census Sundays, canvassing, hosting mobile census stations in neighborhoods, and educational events.

Communications

The City Census team created educational print and digital materials to inform the public about the importance of the 2020 Census in their communities and completing the Census questionnaire. This content was shared with City departments to be displayed in libraries,

recreational facilities, the Airport, multiple Health and Human Services Department offices, Pacific Gateway and City Hall. Departments also made their existing communication channels available to distribute messaging. Examples of leveraged communication channels include social media platforms, websites, newsletters, community engagement and outreach events, email distribution lists, LBTv, the City's phone answering systems, intranet, and mailings. As Co-Chair of the Committee, the City made all messaging content available to Committee members for distribution through their communication channels.

COVID-19 Impacted Operations

Immediately following the COVID-19 outbreak, City staff quickly evaluated impacted census activities and collaborated with City departments and Committee partners to initiate operational changes, to comply with physical distancing requirements. A summary of key operational modifications, new activities, and operating constraints resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic is provided below.

Committee Operations

In March 2020, City staff migrated in-person meetings to virtual meetings, and now collaboration occurs almost exclusively through virtual settings. The City continues to spearhead materials for outreach and has standardized a pickup and drop off protocol for partners. New outreach materials have been created to connect the importance of completing the census to resources needed during crisis management, access to health care, and maintaining a robust healthcare system. Conveying the census as a tool to ensure fair representation across governments and accurate federal resources for the City's diverse communities has also been elevated to remind residents about the role of the census in these areas. As before, these materials are shared with City departments and all partners so that materials are shared within their networks. Given the shift from in-person to digital engagement, the City Census Team launched a Committee Communications Table that meets twice a month to achieve a coordinated and well-developed Citywide communications plan. The Table now ensures an ongoing robust communications plan and near real time feedback to develop messaging as the census efforts and timelines evolve.

Interns and Volunteers

To minimize LBUSD high school students' risk to COVID-19 exposure and because of suspended in-person outreach operations, LBUSD internships were ended at the onset of COVID-19. The student volunteer partnership with the Center for Community Engagement, at CSULB, was also canceled due to suspension of both in-person outreach events and QACs and QAKs activities. CSULB internship roles and responsibilities were adjusted to allow students to support census efforts through telecommuting. Currently two, now CSULB recent graduates, contribute between 15 and 20 hours a week to assist with census self-response rate analysis and reporting, and communications.

Staff and Community Trainings

Staff trainings are currently on hold as most staff are telecommuting and their interaction with the public has been substantially curtailed or eliminated. Community trainings are also on hold to maintain physical distancing. An area of opportunity that has arisen is providing a brief

census training and update to active City commissions via virtual commission meetings. Commissions which have been provided updates include:

- Airport Advisory Commission
- Belmont Shore Parking and Business Improvement Area Advisory Commission
- Homeless Services Advisory Committee
- Human Relations Commission
- Long Beach Transit Board
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Planning Commission

Additional commission census trainings and updates are scheduled for the month of August and September.

Workforce Development for Census Bureau Jobs

Though Census Bureau job recruitment assistance has concluded, the City continues to assist the Bureau to ensure enumerators receive proper training while adhering to physical distancing requirements. Through a partnership with the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department, the Bureau was able to onboard and train approximately 500 enumerators in their vehicles at the Chittick Field surface lot between the dates of July 30 through August 1. This surface lot will also be made continuously available to the Bureau in the that makeup trainings are needed after initial training dates. Similarly, the Economic Development Department and Long Beach Convention and Entertainment Center worked with the City Census Team to secure the 400 Garage Convention Center parking structure to train over 2,200 enumerators between August 2 through August 5. This in-kind service provided by the City will ultimately allow for a total of approximately 2,700 enumerators to be trained to support Bureau Non-Response Follow-Up Operations for the City of Long Beach and 16 surrounding cities.

Community Outreach Services

During the early stages of the pandemic, the City Census Team worked with each organization selected to receive funding to review proposed activities and to adjust activities in ways that continued to educate, motivate, and activate residents on the census, while adhering to physical distancing. Examples of adjustments included replacing canvassing with phone banking and text messaging campaigns, supporting census caravans, and bolstering paid social media advertisement in HTC neighborhoods. As of July 2020, 14 nonprofit organizations have been funded or are in the final stages of receiving funding to reach HTC groups and areas to increase awareness and participation in the 2020 Census. The City Census Team continues to accept proposals, particularly to fund activities focused on African American outreach.

Our latest outreach includes a partnership with funded organizations and City Council District Offices to plan and conduct neighborhood census "chalkathons" and door hangings throughout the city, with a focus on areas with a low response rate. The last door hanging event occurred in Central Long Beach on August 8, 2020, and was attended by approximately 35 volunteers. Future events by funded organizations and Council Districts will focus primarily on "pop-up" census stations at essential businesses.

Communications

To counteract the lack of in-person outreach, paid digital, print, and out of home advertisement have been augmented. Increased paid digital engagement now allows for publishing of frequent postings and targeted messaging for census tracts that are underperforming in comparison to the citywide self-response average. A three-month digital campaign, launched in early August 2020, will showcase the importance of the census on education, public infrastructure, and small business support. The campaign will be reviewed at intervals to evaluate its effectiveness and inform future digital outreach advertisements. Paid digital advertisements through local publications such as the Long Beach Post and Long Beach Business Journal to reach the wider Long Beach community and the business sector are also scheduled. The out of home paid advertisement campaign will also commence in early August 2020 and include 20 billboards in North, West, and Central Long Beach. Census messaging will also be featured through outside “King Ads” on 20 Long Beach Transit buses from early August and last through September. The print campaign will also include newspaper ads, utility bill stuffers and messaging, and light pole banners.

Meal Distributions

Meal distribution events have been identified as key channels to distribute census messaging. The City has partnered with the LBUSD “Grab and Go” meal program, City Council Districts biweekly meal distributions, Parks, Recreation and Marine Summer Meal Program, and food pantry events through local community groups to distribute census postcards every week. These collaborations include multilingual census postcards, flyers, buttons, and other census-branded materials and will continue through September 2020.

Most recently, on July 17, 2020, the City Census Team partnered with the County, Office of Mayor Garcia, and County Supervisor Janice Hahn’s Office, and other partners to provide census material and messaging at a meal distribution drive through event, where almost 3,000 people were served. During this event, staff also piloted a census “pop-up” help station where residents who walked up to the meal event would receive PPE and could access census information and complete the census questionnaire online. Eight households completed the questionnaire onsite for a total count of approximately 30 individuals. Staff will continue to pilot the census pop-up stations as new opportunities arise.

Testing Sites

COVID-19 testing sites have recently become a space made available for census messaging. On August 10, 2020, census messaging began to be on display at all testing site entrances and exits. Ways to complete the census “while you wait” will also be on display alongside vehicles as residents wait to access the COVID-19 testing kit.

Essential Businesses Outreach

In lieu of in-person community events, essential business services have become the new focus to reach residents who may not have access to reliable broadband connection. Best practices from similar public outreach campaigns inform us that residents who are not digitally connected can learn about the census through their visits to:

- Grocery Stores and Convenience Stores
- Pharmacies
- Laundry-Mats
- Discount Retail Stores
- Other essential services will be reviewed as potential outreach locations

Essential business outreach has focused on businesses in HTC and lower-performing census tracts. Staff has connected with these businesses located primarily in Central, West, and North Long Beach to notify them about the census and to partner to install multilingual sidewalk decals. These decals will offer census website and phone number information in multiple languages such as Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog. The sidewalk decals will be on display until September 2020 and be placed on the sidewalk of approximately 100 essential businesses. Traditional outreach materials like posters and flyers have also been provided to essential businesses.

Adjusted Census Schedule and Operating Constraints

The census-taking timeline was also extended to account for the Bureau’s operational delays in the field and to allow for an additional two months to achieve a complete count. The adjusted census timeline is provided below.

Activity/Operation	Original Schedule	New Schedule
Self-response	March 12 - July 31	March 12 - September 30
Group Quarters	April 2 - June 5	April 2 - September 3
Non-response Follow-up	May 13 - July 31	August 11 - September 30
Counts to President	By December 31, 2020	By December 31, 2020
Redistricting Counts to State	By April 1, 2021	By April 1, 2021

For in-depth timeline details and additional adjustments review publication [2020 Census Operational Adjustments Due to COVID-19](#).

While the 2020 Census timeline allows for a longer self-response period, the census budget has remained the same. The Census Team also experienced a reduction in staff due to COVID-19 response needs. Specifically, the Census Team lost graphic design support, general operations support, and data and GIS analysis capabilities from staff reassignments to COVID-19 response efforts. Beginning in July 2020, the Census Team experienced a further reduction of one full-time staff, as the Management Assistant assigned to census engagement operations transitioned to a permanent, full-time position in Public Works. The reduction in staff during a portion of the core operational timeline will limit staff’s ability to create new communication materials, continue partnership and interdepartmental engagement, and conduct census self-response data analysis.

Current City Self-Response Rate

As of August 4, 2020, the City achieved a self-response rate of 62.8 percent. The State self-response rate is 64.4 percent and the nationwide self-response rate is currently at 63.1 percent.

The City self-response rate has consistently ranked near or at the average when compared to the top ten largest cities in the State, as well as when compared with other cities, nationally, that are similar in population size. The City's consistent trending with its State and national peers is especially notable given its large Hard-to-Count (HTC) population, and it being part of Los Angeles County – the hardest to count county in the nation. Daily self-response updates can be found at <https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html>.

With slightly more than four months of data, citywide self-response trends have emerged. Census tracts with the highest self-response rates are found in East, Coastal Long Beach, and areas in North Long Beach. Tracts with lower performing self-response rates are largely concentrated in West/Central Downtown, and North Long Beach. Attachment A reflects a map of City census tracts and associated self-response rates. HTC characteristics among the twenty lowest-performing tracts, represented in shades of brown and orange on the map, align with the tracts that were given the highest California HTC (CA-HTC) Index score. The CA-HTC considers fourteen demographic, housing, and socioeconomic variables correlated with an area being difficult to enumerate. Data suggests that tracts with large Latino, Black, and Asian demographics have fallen behind the City's 2020 self-response average.

Socioeconomic variables identified in tracts with the lowest response rates also include a high percentage of people who speak English as a second language, a high renter population, and a high percentage of households without access to broadband. Attachment B provides a detail demographic and socioeconomic profile of each of the 20 tracts with the lowest response rates.

Next Steps

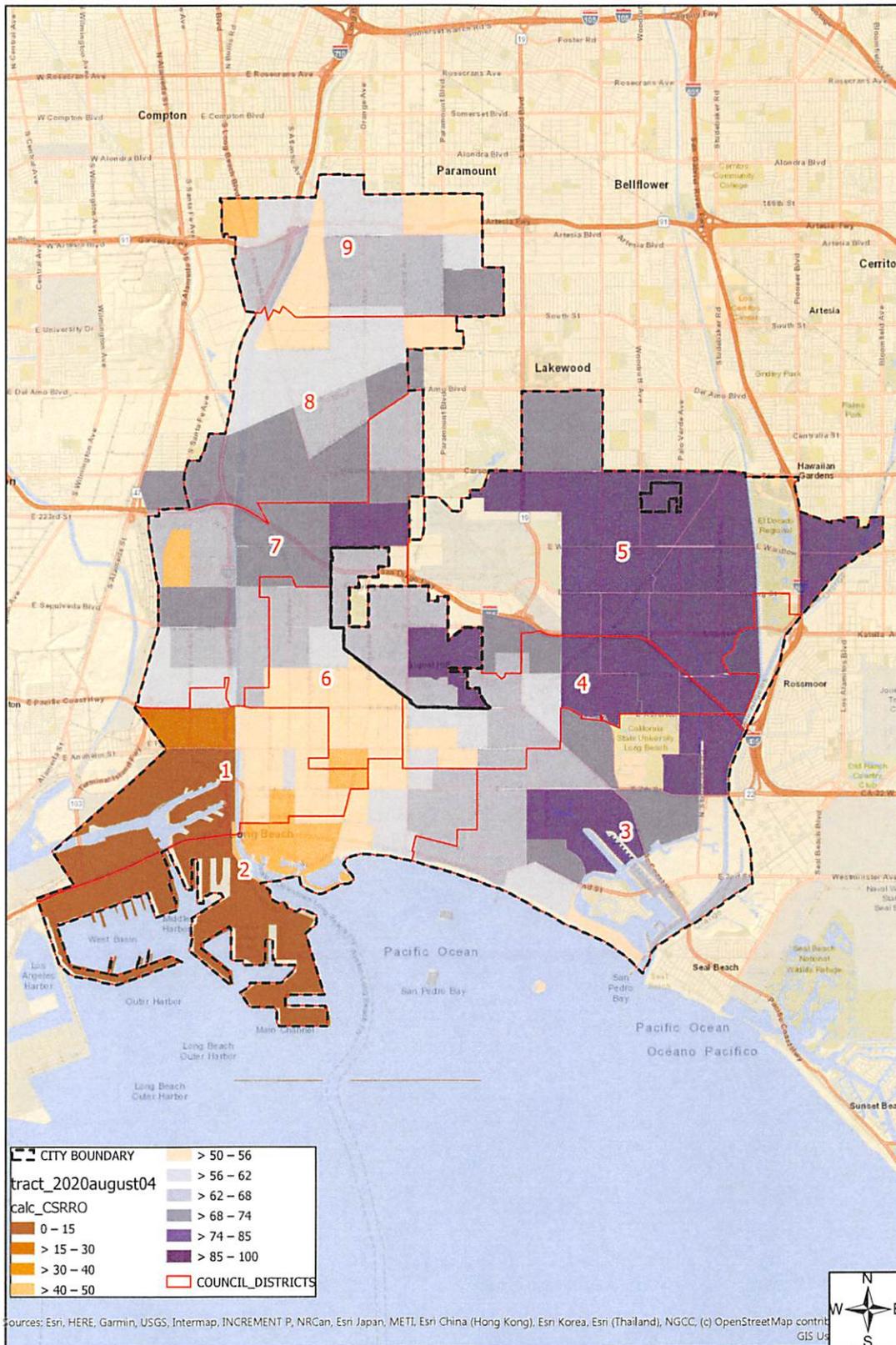
A City Council agenda item to accept additional County funding for census engagement efforts was previously scheduled for September 1, 2020. On August 3, 2020 the Bureau announced a shortening of the timeline from October 31, 2020 to September 30, 2020. The loss of one month of critical local operations and outreach has caused an adjustment for the Council agenda item to be moved to the August 18, 2020 Council meeting. The additional funding will support continued nonprofit outreach to HTC communities, with an emphasis on the African American Community. Staff continues to work with Committee partners to adjust operations. The Census Team will provide a close-out report of census activities in October 2020.

If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Jackson, Deputy City Manager, at (562) 570-5028 or via email at Kevin.Jackson@longbeach.gov.

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List of Attachments:

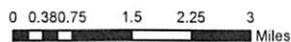
Attachment A: Long Beach Self-Response by Census Tract
Attachment B: 20 Lowest Performing Census Tracts



The GIS map shows U.S. Census 2020 - Self-Response Rate data for the City of Long Beach, CA. In addition, the City Council layer shows district boundary to visualize how council area overlap with 2010 census tracts in our region. Labels in each Census Tract display a cumulative self-response rate (SRR) to date.

Note: The U.S. Census Bureau releases Census 2020 response rate data in a new, 2020 tract-level geography that does not align with any other census data. This California response rate map presents calculated Census 2020 response rates in 2010 tract geography.
Note: Data does not reflect Update Leave area or Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) operations.

Data sources: U.S. Census Bureau self-response rate, 2019 Planning Database, American Community Survey, 2014-2018 (5-year).



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Attachment B

20 Lowest Performing Census Tracts

Ranking	Census Tract	Neighborhood	Population	Response Rate	2010 Response Rate	% Hispanic	%Spanish-Speaking	%Black	%Asian	% Under Age 5	% No Internet Households
1	980033	Port of LB	12	-		0%	0	0	0	0	100
2	575500	Westside South	44	16.3	52	70.45	36.36	0	0	0	72
3	576001	DTLB	5456	44.9	56.5	15.8	4.61	21.51	19.03	4.78	6.57
4	576302	St. Mary's Medical Center	4895	45.9	58.6	50.48	16.98	9.36	36.56	12.88	23.23
5	576401	Hellman	5370	47.8	66.2	77.18	29.19	11.41	4.46	11.7	32.27
6	570403	College Square/Starr King	5186	48	63.5	87.26	33.81	9.12	0	10.12	28.14
7	575902	DTLB/West Vilage	5338	48.5	57.4	33.97	9.35	6.86	11.17	6.6	20.12
8	572500	Upper Westside	3804	48.9	61	28.88	12.24	35.97	9.23	11.88	25.06
9	575402	Washington School	4256	49	61.1	86.54	39.17	4.51	3.36	9.57	25.32
10	570301	Deforest Park/Hamilton	7567	49.3	59.7	68.09	26.24	13.86	5.95	11.84	26.3
11	575802	Wilmore	5684	49.7	59.5	69.82	26.63	5.85	7.51	11.95	27.81
12	576501	Franklin	2992	50.1	63.8	69.7	20.41	15.45	0	6.3	24.68
13	575401	Magnolia District/Washington School	5118	50.1	59.1	91.55	40.68	0.27	0	13.39	30.66
14	573002	Southeast Wrigley	3977	50.7	63.7	73.47	29.09	13.75	8.56	8.24	30.14
15	570203	Mc Kinley	3856	51.1	54.7	53.53	27.77	42.28	0	13.65	31.23
16	575202	Central LB	4722	51.2	65.6	68.85	27.68	2.33	20.38	16.38	25.77
17	576200	East Village	5493	51.8	60.1	46.81	18.33	8.94	9.79	0	18.4
18	575300	Central LB	5051	52.4	65.1	70.66	20.38	5.81	23.22	14.13	45.78
19	575801	Wilmore	2395	52.9	65.2	71.14	34.15	8.68	6.78	6.94	25.07
20	575201	Central LB	4793	54.3	62.6	61.85	17.16	15.73	20.71	5.97	24.88